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AUTHOR Wright, William A.
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ABSTRACT

Data were collected from each graduate on graduation day. The most relevant finding was that future plans were not related to: academic major, academic division, and the University of Maryland Baltimore County honor at graduation. Graduate school attendance declined and a continuing trend of selecting low-cost state university graduate study was noted. Underemployment of recent graduates was found to be increasing. (Author)

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AN ANALYSIS OF THE GRADUATION DAY FUTURE PLANS OF THE CLASS OF 1973 AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND BALTIMORE COUNTY

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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Prepared by:

William A. Wright
Director, Office of Institutional Research
University of Maryland Baltimore County

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The data for this study was collected on cards from each graduate on graduation day. They were asked to indicate their plans for the summer and for the fall. All other data was extracted from their permanent record.

The most relevant finding is that their future plans were not related to: (1) division from which they graduated (Table 1), (2) their major (Table 2), and (3) the UMBC honor conferred at graduation. The lack of any statistical significance (chi-square test) in these tables suggests that the future plans are more true of actual plans for the class as a whole than they are for any of the other groupings in Table 1 through 3. Graduate school attendance is steadily declining: 1970 (59%), 1971 (38%), 1972 (28%) and 1973 (20%). The immediate employment rate is exceptionally low (21%). This reflects the general nature of the job market and indicates a much more long term implication for higher education. The younger siblings and friends of our non-employed graduates will seriously assess the need and the desire to attend a four year institution for anything other than pre-professional education. The unemployment rate of 52% for the 1973 class is much higher than our 4% of all past classes.

Of those students planning to attend graduate school 68% selected a state university and 52% selected a Maryland state college or university (Table 4). This continues a trend for most of our graduates to select low-cost state supported graduate study. This is partially explained by an examination of the two largest suppliers of graduate students (Science and Math/Physics Divisions) and the proximity of University of Maryland professional schools. This observation is verified by the relatively large number of Chemistry graduates attending the Medical School and the large number of Social Work graduates attending the city campus (Table 5).

A more detailed survey questionnaire was sent to this class and they are returning them at a much higher rate than previous classes. An edit of the returns indicates that the 21% employment rate hides a great deal of underemployment in this years class. Of those received almost 40% of those indicating gainful employment cite jobs in retail establishments earning $5000.00 per year or less. However, with only 30% Of class returns on the data is only partially indicative of the plans of the class.

If we compare each of the sample means groupings (by division, by major, by UMBC honors) and the assumption of the alternative hypothesis (H_1) is that the sample mean does not equal the population mean the statistical tests of the significance of the difference indicates that the hypothesis is 'sufficiently unlikely' (see Table 2) except in the cases of the Psychology Ancient Studies, or the Secondary Education majors. This conclusion leads us to reject the assumption that the sample group is 'random' and that the 'bias' of the group (reason for being in the group) should explain the variance in the mean. A Chi-square test was done on all the tables. Table 1, 2, 3 indicate that the variance of the observed and expected frequencies in the cells in the tables indicate that future plans and groupings are 'not significant' (unrelated). This means that UMBC major, division, or honors cannot explain the variance or that some variable not examined in the preliminary analysis could explain the future plans better (such as: sex, age, race, proximity to job, etc.).

The comparison of the unemployment rates at differing time periods could lead to a wrong conclusion. I have just received a copy of the report on the 1972 graduation day survey. A comparison of the data presented there indicates that the future plans of the class of 1973 show marked increase in the number of unemployed graduates (see Table 6). Table 7 indicates that graduation day plans are not indicative of the eventual accomodation to post-graduation pursuits. It indicates that only 30% of the graduates responded a year after graduation and that the non-respondents came from the graduate school and unemployed groups. It may be a hint of the cause of the low response. If the student is underemployed or unemployed they may not desire to communicate that fact.

ANALYSIS OF PRELIMINARY DATA

ON UMBC ALUMNI-CLASSES OF 1973

TABLE 1 FUTURE PLANS BY DIVISION

DIVISION	FUTURE PLANS					
	Grad School	Employed	Not Employee	No Answer	Row % Total	Row Count
Humanities	15.4	22.9	18.6	18.2	18.9	86
Science	11.0	5.2	4.2	6.1	5.9	27
Social Science	50.5	49.0	54.2	57.6	52.6	240
Math/Physics	4.4	2.1	2.5	3.0	2.9	13
Social Work	8.8	2.1	5.1		4.8	22
Education	9.9	18.8	15.3	15.2	14.9	68
COLUMN Count	91	96	236	33		456
TOTAL %	20.0	21.1	51.8	7.2	100.0	

CHI SQUARE=16.82294 with 15 Degrees of Freedom. (Not Significant)

ANALYSIS OF PRELIMINARY DATA

ON UMBC ALUMNI-CLASSES OF 1973

TABLE 2 FUTURE PLANS BY UMBC MAJOR

UMBC Major	FUTURE PLANS					
	Grad School	Employed	Not Employee	No Answer	Row % Total	Row Count
Elementary Ed	2.2	12.5	8.5	9.1	8.1	37
Secondary Ed	7.7	6.3	6.8	6.1	6.8	31
American Stdy	2.2	10.4	3.4	3.0	4.6	21
English	3.3	6.3	8.5	6.1	6.8	31
French	1.1	2.1	.8	3.0	1.3	6
Ancient Stdys.	1.1	1.0	1.3	.0	1.1	5
Philosophy	2.2	1.0	1.3	.0	1.3	6
Spanish	1.1	1.0	2.1	3.0	1.8	8
Theatre	3.3	.0	.8	.0	1.1	5
Option II	1.1	1.0	.4	3.0	.9	4
Econonomics	2.2	6.3	2.5	3.0	3.3	15
History	6.6	7.3	13.6	15.2	11.0	50
Political Sci.	5.5	6.3	3.8	9.1	5.0	23
Psychology	20.9	18.8	21.2	15.2	20.2	92
Sociology	15.4	7.3	12.7	9.1	11.8	54
Social Work	8.8	2.1	5.1	.0	4.8	22
Geog.	.0	3.1	.4	6.1	1.3	6
Biology	6.6	3.1	3.8	3.0	4.2	19

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ANALYSIS OF PRELIMINARY DATA

ON UMBC ALUMNI-CLASSES OF 1973

TABLE 2 FUTURE PLANS BY UMBC MAJOR (CONT'D)

UMBC MAJOR	FUTURE PLANS					
	Grad School	Employed	Not Employee	No Answer	Row % Total	Row Count
Chemistry	4.4	2.1	.4	3.0	1.8	8
Mathematics	2.2	2.1	1.3	3.0	1.8	8
Physics	2.2	.0	1.3	.0	1.1	5
COLUMN Count	91	96	236	33		456
TOTAL %	20.0	21.1	51.8	7.2	100.0	

CHI SQUARE=72.12063 with 60 Degrees of Freedom. (Not Significant)

ANALYSIS OF PRELIMINARY DATA

ON UMBC ALUMNI-CLASSES OF 1973

TABLE 3 UMBC HONORS CONFERRED BY FUTURE PLANS

FUTURE PLANS	UMBC HONOR CONFERRED					
	Summa	Magna	Cum Laude	No Honors	Row % Total	Row Count
Grad School	.0	4.4	7.7	87.9	20.0	91
Employed	2.1	.0	11.5	86.5	21.1	96
Not Employed	.8	3.0	5.9	90.3	51.8	236
No Answer	.0	3.0	12.1	84.8	7.2	33
COLUMN TOTAL Count	4	12	36	404		456
%	.9	2.6	7.9	88.6	100.0	

CHI SQUARE =10.03172 with 9 Degrees of Freedom. (Not Significant)

ANALYSIS OF PRELIMINARY DATA

ON UMBC ALUMNI-CLASSES OF 1973

TABLE 4 FUTURE PLANS FOR GRADUATE STUDY

BY DIVISION AND TYPE OF UNIVERSITY

DIVISION	TYPE OF GRADUATE UNIVERSITY								
	Will Not Attend	UOM Grad Schools	MD State Colleges	MD Priv Colleges	Non MD Priv Col	Non MD State U	No Answer	Row % Total	Row Count
Humanities	19.7	11.8	.0	6.3	36.4	28.6	16.7	18.9	86
Science	4.7	11.8	.0	6.3	18.2	21.4	.0	5.9	27
Social Sci.	53.2	44.1	90.0	68.8	27.3	28.6	66.7	52.6	240
Math/Physics	2.5	5.9	.0	6.3	9.1	.0	.0	2.9	13
Social Work	3.8	17.6	10.0	.0	.0	7.1	.0	4.8	22
Education	16.2	8.8	.0	12.5	9.1	14.3	16.7	14.9	68
COLUMN Count	365	34	10	16	11	14	6		456
TOTAL %	80.0	7.5	2.2	3.5	2.4	3.1	1.3	100.0	

CHI SQUARE-48.17336 with 30 Degrees of Freedom. (Significant)

ANALYSIS OF PRELIMINARY DATA

ON UMBC ALUMNI--CLASSES OF 1973

TABLE 5 FUTURE PLANS TO ATTEND GRADUATE SCHOOL BY UMBC MAJOR

UMBC MAJOR	ATTENDANCE AT GRADUATE SCHOOL				
	Yes	No	No Answer	Row % Total	Row Count
Elementary Ed	2.1	10.5	2.4	8.1	37
Secondary Ed	7.6	7.4	.0	6.8	31
American Stdys.	2.1	5.6	2.4	4.6	21
English	3.3	8.4	2.4	6.8	31
French	1.0	1.5	.0	1.3	6
Ancient Stdys.	1.0	1.2	.0	1.1	5
Philosophy	2.1	1.2	.0	1.3	6
Spanish	1.0	1.2	7.1	1.8	8
Theatre	3.3	.3	2.4	1.1	5
Option II	1.0	.9	.0	.9	4
Economics	2.1	2.8	9.5	3.3	15
History	6.6	11.8	14.3	11.0	50
Political Sci.	5.5	4.3	9.5	5.0	23
Psychology	20.9	19.5	23.8	20.2	92
Sociology	15.4	11.1	9.5	11.8	54
Social Work	8.8	3.7	4.8	4.8	22

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ANALYSIS OF PRELIMINARY DATA

ON UMBC ALUMNI-CLASSES OF 1973

TABLE 5 FUTURE PLANS TO ATTEND GRADUATE SCHOOL BY UMBC MAJOR

UMBC MAJOR	ATTENDANCE AT GRADUATE SCHOOL				
	Yes	No	No Answer	Row % Total	Row Count
Geography	.0	1.5	2.4	1.3	6
Biology	6.6	3.7	2.4	4.2	19
Chemsitry	4.4	.9	2.4	1.8	8
Mathematics	2.2	1.2	4.8	1.8	8
Physics	2.2	.9	.0	1.1	5
COLUMN TOTAL Count	91	323	42		456
%	20.0	70.8	9.2	100.0	

CHI SQUARE=62.21123 with 40 Degrees of Freedom. (Significant)

TABLE 6.

COMPARISON OF FUTURE PLANS
OF GRADUATES ON GRADUATION DAY
BY YEAR OF GRADUATION

FUTURE PLANS	GRADUATION YEAR			
	1972* Count	Percent	1973 Count	Percent
No Future Plans	128	47	236	56
Employment	96	35	96	23
Graduate School	71	26	91	22
Employment & Grad School	(-21)	(-8)		
TOTAL	274**		423***	

*Initial Year of 3 X 5 Card Survey.
** Rrepresents 85% of Graduates
***Represents 93% of Graduates.

TABLE 7.

COMPARISON OF THE FUTURE PLANS

AND CURRENT PURSUITS OF THE CLASS

OF 1972

	In June 1972 Future Plans			In June 1973 Current Pursuit		
	Grad School	Job	No Plan	Grad School	Job	No Plan
(Count)	71	96	128	14	82	10
(Percent)	47%	35%	26%	13%	77%	9%